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COUNTRY Germany (Soviet Zone)

REPORT NO.

TOPIC Koethen Airfield

EVALUATION See below

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DATE OF CONTENT 17 May to 8 June 1952

DATE PREPARED 8 July 1952

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PAGES 3 ENCLOSURES (NO. & TYPE) 1 sketch on ditto

REMARKS

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At 12:10 p.m. on 17 May 1952, a formation of two swept-back jet fighters with auxiliary fuel tanks was observed over Koethen airfield. At 12:40 p.m., an alert flight of 4 swept-back jet fighters and 3 additional jet fighters of the same type were parked in front of a hangar. At 9 a.m. on 19 May, flying started by individual swept-back jet fighters. Air activity was continued by aircraft flying in elements of two after 1 p.m. On 24 May up to 4:30 p.m., flying was practiced by swept-back jet fighters. About 10 a.m. on 28 May, a Yak-11 was observed over Koethen. About 8:30 a.m. and 3 p.m. on 29 May, there was individual flying by swept-back jet fighters.

2. No details could be observed from a large distance when MiG-15s were towed away by motor vehicles. It was conspicuous that the distance between the nose of the plane and the vehicle was very short. Source believed that the plane was connected with the vehicle by means of a tow bar. The towing speed was normal. (1)

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4. On 31 May, the following take-offs and landings by MiG-15s were observed in sunny weather:

Landings:

11:47 a.m.  
11:48 a.m.  
12:04 p.m.  
12:11 "  
12:36 "  
12:46 "  
1:04 "  
1:10 "  
1:12 "  
1:19 "  
1:21 "

Take-Offs:

12:27 p.m.  
12:50 "  
12:52 "  
12:59 "  
1:03 "  
1:13 "

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On 2 June, no flying was observed except for a Yak-11 which engaged in aerobatics and landed at 3:13 p.m. Between 3 and 4:30 a.m. on 4 June, night flying was practiced. On 5 June, night flying started at 10 p.m. and was terminated at 0:30 a.m. The following take-offs and landings were observed:

Take-offs:

10:10 p.m.  
10:19 "  
10:42 "  
10:55 "  
11:01 "  
11:04 "  
11:16 "  
11:26 "  
11:29 "  
11:30 "

Landings:

10:10 p.m.  
10:21 "  
10:32 "  
10:34 "  
10:48 "  
10:49 "  
11:10 "  
11:11 "  
11:20 "  
11:22 "  
11:32 "

All the take-offs and landings were performed by swept-back jet fighters except for a landing at 11:22 p.m. which was made by a Yak-11. All landings were performed rather poorly. (2) Throughout the day on 6 June, no air activity was observed.

5. On 31 May, a detail of 10 to 15 men wearing red-bordered black epaulets was observed near the old heating station. It appeared that the soldiers were also quartered there. On 5 June, ten twin-barreled 20-mm AA guns were emplaced east of the hangars. Instruction was being given on three guns. (3)
6. The traffic control tower is apparently to be raised because a scaffold was observed there.
7. In early May, Soviet officers were observed wearing caps with gold braid 12 to 15 mm wide above the visor. The braid resembled that previously worn by German naval officers except for the fact, that the leaves were more widely spaced. (4) In early June, less officers were observed than in early May. (5) The administrative officers wore silver braids and buttons.

8. Between 11:30 a.m. and 2:50 p.m. on 6 June, no air activity was observed at the field. At 11:30 a.m., four MiG-15s with red numbers were parked at the east end of the runway. The planes were guarded by a sentry who was armed with a submachine gun. Fourteen aircraft completely covered with tarpaulins were parked in the northwestern section of the field. Trenches 20 to 100 cm deep, covering road blocks existed at the field.

Comments.

- (1) For sketch of tow-bar for MiG-15, see annex.
- (2) The observation that night flying was practiced by individual MiG-15s agrees with previous information on the status of the training of other new fighter regiments in the Soviet Zone of Germany. Therefore, the information of source that all landings were performed poorly is believed credible. Ground sources

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have not yet been able to distinguish the two units at the field, namely the one fighter regiment and the one unidentified unit equipped with MiG-15s. According to another reliable source, not only the fighter regiment but also the new unit almost exclusively made local flights. This may indicate the new unit is also a training unit. Because of strict security measures at the field, ground sources very seldom could observe details such as aircraft numbers and take-off times during air activity.

- (3) According to a previous report, AA guns were assumed to be located at the field as early as 8 May 1952. [REDACTED] The present report contains the first details on the number and type of AA guns. For locations of guns.

see Annex.

- (4) The same braids on dress caps were previously reported by another source. See [REDACTED]

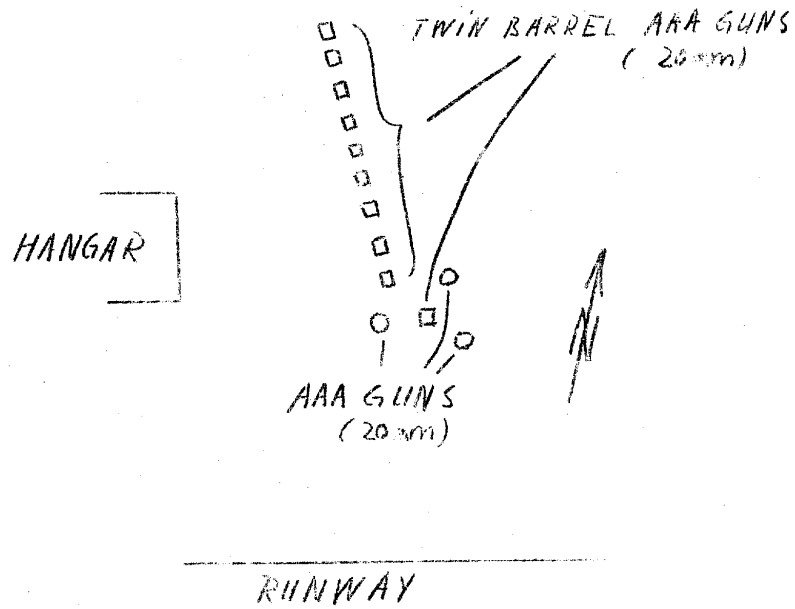
- (5) The information that fewer officers were observed than in early May cannot be considered an indication that the number of officers has diminished in the military post. It appears, that, in early May, more officers than usual were observed in Koethen in connection with the May Day celebrations.

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Location of AAA Guns at Koethen Airfield



Tow-Bar for MiG-15

